

REMARKS

In the patent application, claims 18-22 are pending. Claims 18-19 have been elected for examination purposes and claims 20-22 have been withdrawn as non-elected claims.

At section 1 of the office action, the Examiner withdraws the allowability of claims 18 and 19 in view of a newly discovered reference, *Hackbarth et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,199,468, hereafter referred to as *Hackbarth*).

At section 2, claims 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Harkbarth*, in view of *MacFarlane* (U.S. Patent No. 4,915,000) and *Neuhauser et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 2,654,404).

In rejecting claims 18 and 19, the Examiner states that *Harkbarth* discloses a vertical cutting device as claimed excepted that *Hackbarth* fails to disclose the guide rail (21) and three slide bars (22a, 22b, 22c). The Examiner points to *MacFarlane* and *Glastra* for disclosing slide support.

Applicant has amended claim 18 to include the limitation that the third linear slide bar (22c, 22c') is spaced from and substantially parallel to the second linear slide bar (22b, 22'b), and that the second pulley (47, 47') is spaced from the second blade turning unit ((32b, 32'b). The support for the amendment can be found in Figures 2 and 6.

It is respectfully submitted that, in *Hackbarth*, the pulley 30 and the band-knife rotating device 21 are mounted on the same carriage 20 so that the band-knife rotating device 21 moving together with the pulley 30. In contrast, the blade turning unit (32b, 32'b) and the second pulley (47, 47') are separately mounted on the second slide bar (22b, 22'b) and third slide bar (22c, 22'c) respectively. *MacFarlane* does not disclose or even suggest a blade turning unit or a slide bar for allowing the blade turning unit to move along. *Glastra* does not disclose or even suggest a blade turning unit or a slide bar for allowing the blade turning unit to move along.

For the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claim 18 is clearly distinguishable over the cited *Hackbarth*, *MacFarlane* and *Glastra* references.

As for claim 19, it is dependent from claim 18 and recites features not recited in claim 18. For reasons regarding claim 18 above, it is respectfully submitted that claim 19 is also distinguishable over the cited *Hackbarth*, *MacFarlane* and *Glastra* references.

The Examiner also admits that *Hackbarth* lacks a horizontal cutting device, but points to *Neuhauser* for disclose the same. It is respectfully submitted that *Neuhauser* discloses a timber cutting device having a plurality of fixed mounted saw blades for making a number of parallel cuts simultaneously. Such a timber cutting device does not have any adjustment in either the X direction or the Y direction. It would be no incentive for one skilled in the art to look to a timber cutting device to design a foam sponge cutting device. Furthermore, *Neuhauser* does not disclose or even suggest a blade turning unit or a slide bar. Thus, claims 18 and 19 are clearly distinguishable over the cited over the cited *Hackbarth*, *MacFarlane* and *Glastra* references, further in view of *Neuhauser*.

Applicant has added claims 23 and 24. Claim 23 is dependent from claim 18 and has the further limitation that the transmission mechanism (23, 24) is mechanically linked to the second blade turning unit (32b, 32'b) for moving the second blade turning unit simultaneously with the second pulley (47), which is spaced from the second blade turning unit. Claim 24 is dependent from claim 23 and has the further limitation that each of the first, second and third slide bars are engaged with a thread rod for moving the first pulley, the second blade turning unit and the second pulley, respectively. The support for claims 23 and 24 can be found in Figures 2 and 6, and p.5, lines 17-26 of the specification. No new matter has been introduced.


It is respectfully submitted none of the cited *Hackbarth*, *MacFarlane* and *Glastra* references, further in view of *Neuhauser* discloses or even suggest these features.

CONCLUSION

As amended, claims 18, 19, 23 and 24 are allowable. Early allowance of these claims is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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